

Bethany Lutheran Church

"To grow so deep in Christ through worship, education,
and fellowship that we celebrate by reaching out to others."



Important Dates

6-14 Council meeting 6:30 PM

7-12 Council meeting 6:30 PM

Contact Information

Bethany Lutheran Church
235 South Second Street
PO Box 236
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(319) 643-5998

Pastor Chad Whaley
pastor@wbbethany.org

Pastor is in the office often so stop in or
call (319) 643-5998.

Admin. Assistant: Paula Casper
blcsecretary@lcom.net

Office Hours
Tuesday & Thursday 8:00-11:30 a.m.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

Simply search "Bethany Lutheran
Church (ELCA) West Branch, Iowa" on
facebook and "Like" our page!

ALSO FIND US ON TWITTER!

Search @blcwestbranch

"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by
name; you are mine." – Isaiah 43:1



Dear Beloved Saints,

There is a poem upon the wall in my office I recently moved to
be more directly in my line of sight where I most often sit so I
can look at it frequently over the course of the day. It is a poem
of promise, hope and love from Pastor Liv Larson Andrews.

*When we are...
rushed and stressed
rested and attentive
despairing and depressed
fruitful and healthy
barren and weak
strong and centered
and everything in between
we belong to God.
We are loved.*

This poem seems to capture the essence of what it is to be human. It also does an
excellent job of naming so much of what we experienced and felt over the course
of the last 15 months or so. Through it all, when the world might attempt to tell
us otherwise, the truth remains in the last 7 words. The truth that nothing can take
from us. *We belong to God. We are loved.*

It's God's same promise of identity, hope and love the prophet Isaiah delivered to
the people of Israel while in captivity in Babylon. The Lord would redeem and
return them home. The Lord was with them. The Lord had not forsaken or aban-
doned them. "You are mine," God reminds them.

So, wherever this poem finds you ... exhausted or depressed, joyful and hopeful,
frightened and anxious, confident and optimistic ... hear the good news that
sustains us through it all. You belong to God. You are loved!

In peace,



June Birthdays

06/01 Sarah Fischer, Phil Hougen
 06/02 Ethan Fetzer
 06/06 Gavin Hierseman
 Stacy Beyer
 06/07 Richard Madsen
 06/11 Lee Cassabaum
 06/13 Annika Olson,
 Lauren Whaley
 06/15 Amanda Whaley
 06/17 Jessica Harding (Liebergen)
 06/17 Curt Casper
 06/18 Jennifer Leslie, Chad Whaley
 William VanScoyoc
 06/20 Lon Liebergen
 06/30 Sue Hughes

**If you don't see your birthday listed,
 please contact Paula so we can update our
 database.*

July Birthdays

07/02 Diane Hougen
 07/05 Kim Colvin
 07/07 Tara Langley, Mason Sweat
 07/08 Lynn Snyder
 07/09 Tim Shields
 07/10 Jerry Dodds
 07/12 Dan Holstad
 07/13 Peggy Jeffries, June Madsen
 07/14 Herb Friis
 07/15 Claudia Beyer,
 Dale Swenson
 07/16 Dan Haub
 07/17 Anna Bruns
 07/19 Roxanne Bahnsen
 07/20 Matthew Paulsen,
 Kristin Casady
 07/23 Kelsi Fryauf
 07/25 Patsy Ernst
 07/30 Carol Roghair
 07/31 Derek Fetzer



Bethany Books

by Frank Frostestad

For All Who Hunger: Searching for Communion in a Shattered World shows the value of the church as a place where people cannot only hear that they are loved but that they are good. As the founding pastor of St. Lydia's in Brooklyn, New York, where worship takes place over a meal, Emily M.D. Scott spent eight years ministering to a collective of people with different backgrounds, incomes, and levels of social skills. Each week they broke bread, sang hymns, made conversation with strangers, and then did the dishes. In a city where people live on top of each other, people are still lonely. These gatherings filled a longing that most people did not realize they felt. Scott weaves stories and reflections from the life of her unlikely congregation. She discovers how small acts of connection hold more power than we realize in a time when our differences are being weaponized. When members of her congregation build relationships with their neighbors, they find courage and resources to begin working for a more just world. *For All Who Hunger* is a story about a God whose love has no limits and a faith that opens our eyes to the truth. (recommended in the *Living Lutheran*)

Books For Children

Help Me, God, is "a take-along Prayer Book for little hearts". Prayers that are appropriate for incidents that occur in daily life are featured. Biblical verses that correspond to the situation are also provided. (donated)

Thank You Prayer is adapted by Josephine Page and illustrated by Caroline Jayne Church. It portrays a well known children's prayer that deals with many aspects of daily life. (donated)

DVD

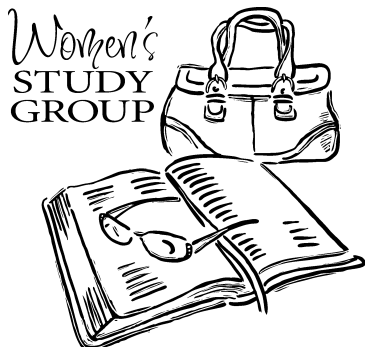
The Biggest Little Farm chronicles the eight year quest of John and Molly Chester. They trade city living for 200 acres of barren farmland. They have a dream to harvest in harmony with nature. Through perseverance and embracing the opportunity provided by nature's conflicts, the Chester's unlock and uncover a biodiverse design for living that exists far beyond their farm, its seasons and wildest imagination. It features beautiful photography, captivating animals, and an urgent message to heed Mother Nature's call. *The Biggest Little Farm* provides us all with a vital blueprint for better living and a healthier planet. (donated)



Pastor Chad's sermons can now be found on Bethany's website (www.wbbethany.org) by placing your cursor over the "Resource" tab found on the home page and then selecting "Sermons" when it pops up.



Women's Study Group



WELCOME BACK

Thursday Morning
6:00 AM in the Great Hall.
All are Welcome!

The letter below was recently received from the Office of the Bishop of the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to which Bethany is part of. Great work people of God! Together we are the church doing God's work in the world.

Mission Support Thank You

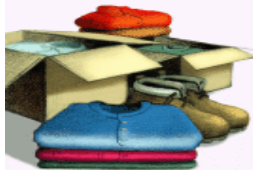
THANK YOU for your continued generosity in providing mission support throughout 2020 even in the midst of Covid-19 challenges and the Derecho. For the fiscal year 2020, the Southeastern Iowa Synod received mission support at the same level as the prior year and finished the year with expenses lower than expected. In February, the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council voted unanimously to distribute surplus funds to our ministry partners based on the results of the year-end audit. A total of \$164,400 has been provided for three ministries: \$54,800 to Lutheran Services in Iowa, (over and above the synod's annual appropriation of \$175,000); \$54,800 to the LSI Disaster Response Fund; and \$54,800 to the Southeastern Iowa Synod Fund for Leaders Endowment supporting seminary students from this synod.



Please share this news with those who give so generously in your congregation.

HOPE CHEST NEWS:

Clothes for those in need



We are now accepting SUMMER clothing donations ONLY. We are most in need of children's clothing sizes Toddler (2T- 4T) through youth (14-16). We are always in need of athletic shoes for all ages.

THANK YOU to all of you who have donated in the past and kept us well supplied!!

Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) News

Happy Father's Day!

At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we strive to build up and empower Iowa kids and families. For us, Father's Day is a time to celebrate all the fathers and male role models we see every day.

Through our Early Childhood Services, young men are learning to become dads. They're becoming confident and active in their child's life, and they are creating loving, bright futures for their families. Many Iowa children entering foster care need a positive male role model in their lives. And through LSI Foster Care and Adoption, our licensed foster dads are there to help guide them.

This is only possible through your support of LSI! If you would like to make a gift, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service!

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and Facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Finding Paradise

Perseverance is a familiar quality for Mon, who after spending decades living as a refugee from an early age was recently able to place roots in Iowa and succeed in building a life for his family.

After living in a Nepali refugee camp for almost 24 years, Mon's family was able to resettle in the U.S. When they arrived in Iowa, they moved directly into a tiny apartment. But the single room was not sufficient for their family – especially once their youngest daughter was born. They stayed in the apartment for four years, but Mon was determined to create a better home for his family.

Mon secured housing for his family through the Habitat for Humanity program, and through LSI Refugee and Immigrant Services, he was able to get on track and save and earn money towards his goal of homeownership. With guidance from staff in LSI's Match and Save financial program, he was able to open a savings account and develop a monthly savings plan.

Mon and his family moved into their new home last year, and he said LSI and Habitat for Humanity were critical steps in helping him learn about U.S. finances and savings – lessons that will pay off during his journey as a homeowner.

"I felt very sad when I left my country," Mon says. "I felt as if I lost my paradise. But when I got the key and when I entered my house, I felt that I regained my lost paradise. So that was the happiest moment in my life and right now, I, my family, and kids are super happy to live in this new house."



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Faith at Home

These short Bible passages and reflection starters are one more way we are trying to spur conversation about faith at home and also absorb ourselves in the word of God. We hope you find them beneficial.

**Matthew 6:9a**

"Our Father in heaven,"

- For me, the Lord's prayer...
- God, as our Father or as a parent,...
- When I pray...

Joel 2:28-29

Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days, I will pour out my spirit.

- I sense God's spirit when...
- A question I have about God's spirit is...
- I think that having the God's spirit poured out on everyone...



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.



Food Packaging 2021

A group recently gathered for a *Take Away Hunger* food packaging event. Thanks to Mike Fryauf for organizing and leading this ministry effort, to those who gave of their time to package and those who gave of their money to purchase the product. 2,808 meals were packaged and will be delivered to Oklahoma to a shelter for retired military personnel.

I was hungry and you
gave me food,
I was thirsty and you
gave me something to drink.

Matthew 25:35, NRSV



**TAKE AWAY
HUNGER**



God's work. Our hands.

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
COUNCIL MINUTES—April 5, 2021 (via Zoom)

The meeting was called to order by President Hughes at 6:34 pm

Members present: Curt Casper, Patricia Ernst, Del Hughes, Amber Marsh, Kristin McElhinney, Dave Poppen, Jill Taylor, Pastor Chad Whaley

Members absent: Dave Bahnsen, Anne Fetzer
 Pastor opened the meeting with a prayer.

Pastor's Report

Pastor shared highlights from this month in his discussion:

These Covid times are hard but came out of Holy Week with special and powerful moments from the Holy Spirit.

This year with no shared religious services, we planned all three services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. It was a busy month of planning with lots of helpers and we received great, positive feedback that was helpful and reaffirming. Thanks to all staff for their help and assistance. Special thanks to Jill Taylor for her work with worship attendance this month.

Pastor was able to visit Crestview for the first time in over a year.

Overall, lots of good feedback from congregation members on worship service formats.

Secretary's Report

A small typo edit (second sentence under building and grounds) to March minutes.

Amber motioned to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Curt. Motion approved.

Treasurer's Report

Patsy motioned to accept the treasurer's report, Amber seconded. Motion approved.

Committee Reports

Building & Grounds

Thanks to Linda, Patsy & Del for cleaning up outside areas of the church.

Appearance of mold that Del/Curt will look at later.

Education & Youth

48 children in the community participated in Bethany's Easter Kit (registration was required). We are currently planning the next kit which will be the final one before summer break.

High participation with "Grab and Go" craft station that was set-up the Saturday before spring break: 16 dozen out of 18 dozen crafts were picked up (no registrations - it was drop-by format).

Faith formation classes are continuing as usual via Zoom. A few families aren't able to join due to Internet connectivity issues.

Evangelism & Outreach

No report.

Fellowship

No report.

Stewardship

No new updates to report.

Worship & Music

Lots of planning and getting ready for Easter and Holy Week services.

Easter lilies were ordered.

Beautiful weather for outdoor Easter service with about 30 in attendance.

Would like to thank Jill Taylor for coordinating a list of congregational members, calling members, and creating a chart for reference.

Old Business

Building Usage Review - COVID Updates

Last month the council approved that we allow 20 members, at Pastor's discretion, to attend in-person worship using precautionary guidelines. It has been working well with 20 in attendance.

Calling congregational members seems to be working very well. Thanks to Jill Taylor for her work and efforts in doing this. Inviting members has shown to be very powerful.

Outdoor services will continue to be planned when the weather cooperates.

Curt motioned to continue to allow up to 20 members to attend in-person indoor worship using precautionary guidelines until the next council meeting. Patsy seconded. Motion approved.

Consideration of Pay for Jill B.

Going forward in 2021: a monthly paycheck that is a single compensation rather than the current three separate lines/figures.

The combined compensation of three lines would be divided by 12 months.

Discussion of extra services or inability to provide services, and how pay would be affected. It was determined that if absent for a Sunday service, the pianist rate of \$110 would only be deducted from monthly compensation.

Re-evaluate for 2022 with budget considerations.

Jill T. moved to motion a monthly compensation of \$663.33 which combines the accompanist, choir director, and the pianist line items in the 2021 budget. Curt seconded. Motion approved.

New Business

Synod Assembly Replacement for Al Beyers (Dave Bahnsen)

(Continued on page 8)

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Dave P. motioned to appoint Dave Bahnsen to be our representative at the 2021 Synod Assembly in May, in replacement for Al Beyers. Amber seconded. Motion approved.

Great Hall Use: Indoor Worship

Last two Sundays have been close to 20 people in the upstairs sanctuary and providing the Great Hall for an additional indoor worship area would address a potential overflow.

Same precautionary guidelines policy would apply to upstairs sanctuary: required face mask, required social distancing outside of the household, and a limit of 25 people.

Supervision will be needed to ensure that our Covid restrictions are being followed.

If this becomes long term, an additional expense for a tablet will be needed to ensure worship can be properly provided to the Great Hall. It is needed to hook up to the TV to stream the online worship video.

Dave P. motioned to allow Great Hall for overflow worship for 25 people; the same precautionary guideline rules apply as the upstairs sanctuary. Classrooms and kitchen are to remain closed. Jill T. seconded. Motion is approved.

Great Hall Use: Congregational Small Groups
Great Hall use for our church's small groups (ex: Faith Formation classes)

Small groups will need to communicate with Paula on the used areas for scheduling and cleaning purposes. Classrooms and kitchens will remain closed.

Dave P. motioned to allow small church groups to use the Great Hall following precautionary guidelines as previously established by church council and a limit of 15 people; Classrooms and kitchen are to remain closed. Jill T. seconded. Motion approved.

Other Great Hall Use Requests

Council received requests to use the building from outside non-church groups or for non-church events. Jill motioned to postpone admitting outside non-church groups for building usage until next Council meeting. Dave P. seconded.

Confirmation Services - to be determined later.

Mowing & Lawn Service Contract - Casper Lawn Maintenance

Dave P. motioned to approve Casper Lawn Maintenance Contract as written. Jill T. seconded. Motion approved.

Dave P. moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Jill T. seconded. Motion approved.

Pastor closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Regular Meeting – May 10, 2021

2020 Stewardship at a glance

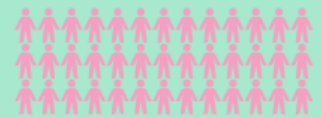
BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

2020 Stewardship at a glance

1 PETER 4:10:
AS EACH HAS RECEIVED A GIFT, USE IT TO SERVE ONE
ANOTHER, AS GOOD STEWARDS OF GOD'S VARIED GRACE

MORE THAN 1000 VOLUNTEER HOURS

Many hands make light work. Not only can you offer monetary support, but also donate your time, which is priceless.



HOPE CHEST CLOTHING DONATIONS



MORE THAN 200 ITEMS

10 large bags of items were donated to local families in need. Making a difference in the lives of over 22 people

>900

180 bags of groceries donated to support 14 families.

This was double the need of 2019
BLC also provides financial support to the WBHS food pantry which serves >13 children

FOOD PANTRY SUPPORT



2020 MONETARY GIFTS \$21,211



Over 13% of our annual budget at BLC is designated to help our neighbors in need.

Thank you for helping to spread God's Word

OUR CHARITABLE DONATIONS CAN INSPIRE YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO ALSO GIVE TO CAUSES CLOSE TO THEIR HEART.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP VISIT
WBBETHANY.ORG

Together we can make a difference in the lives of others



Synod Assembly Recap

The 34th Assembly of the Iowa Synod was held online on Friday, May 21, and Saturday, May 22, 2021, under the theme “Baptized and Set Free.” Assembly voting members gathered via Zoom, and visitors were able to access a livestream.

The assembly convened on Friday, May 21st. This session included the adoption of the agenda and standing rules for the meeting. It also included education sessions called Just Move by spoken word artist, Joe Davis, and musician David Scherer. Davis and Scherer used art, music, discussion, and video to teach about engaging in anti-racism and inclusion efforts in local ministry contexts.

The assembly reconvened Saturday, May 22. There were three educational sessions and a report from the churchwide organization by ELCA churchwide representative, Rev. Carmelo Santos, Director for Theological Diversity and Ecumenical and Interreligious Engagement. Pastor Santos presented “a way of hearing, a way of seeing, and a way of teaching” through the lens of baptism.

The assembly also elected voting members to represent the synod at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly to be held in Columbus, Ohio. The assembly also considered two resolutions, “Child Protection,” which encourages members of the synod to develop protection policies, read and study the Social Statement on Child Abuse and Child Protection. The other resolution, “Housing and Welcoming Refugee Children” resolves the ELCA’s commitment to welcoming refugees and encourages members of the synod to engage with state and faith organizations that welcome refugee children to Iowa.

The assembly concluded Saturday with a service of the word. Worship included a remembrance of baptism and the installation of Office of the Bishop staff, Pastor Dan Kuckuck, and Deacon Jodi Schuman. Pastor Dirk Stadtlander who serves FreeIndeed, a congregation within the walls of the Anamosa State Penitentiary, was also installed. The Synod Assembly offering (give online) was designated for new ministries in the Southeastern Iowa Synod and FreeIndeed. Additionally, a courtesy resolution of thanksgiving for the assembly and ministries of the Southeastern Iowa Synod is available online.

Monetary Gifts Report

Submitted by Jill Taylor

Saints in Worship

Worship has been outdoor and online. We have been averaging 20 -30 people outdoors and many have joined us live on Facebook or viewed at a later time.

Thanks for worshipping with us!

| | April 2021 | | YTD | |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Receipts | Actual 12,588 | Budget 13,496 | Actual 49,801 | Budget 53,986 |
| Total Expenses | Actual 13,308 | Budget 13,865 | Actual 52,387 | Budget 55,477 |

Thank you all for faithfully stewarding the gifts God has entrusted us with in fulfilling the ministry and mission of God here at Bethany Lutheran Church! In so many ways, not just monetarily, God is abundantly providing for our needs.

Community

become
live
grow

everyone
Jesus
world
friendly
aim
growth
world
friendly
aim
growth
world
friendly
aim
growth

faith
worship
difference
Christ
Love
caring
building
reach
heart
know
New
witness
experience
others
sharing
lives
congregation
relationships
commitment
walk
come
life
wisdom
growth
Chistians
growth
aim
friendly
world
growth

relationships
changing
experience
witness
New
know
heart
building
reach
others
sharing
lives
congregation
relationships
commitment
walk
come
life
wisdom
growth
Chistians
growth
aim
friendly
world
growth

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Thanks
FOR
Serving



DON'T FORGET TO LIKE US!



PEACE
BE WITH
you